

**AGENDA ITEM VI C**  
**UPDATE ON CONDITIONALLY APPROVED PROGRAM**  
**LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**B.A. IN WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

At its meeting on January 22, 2003, the Board of Regents took the following action:

**The Board of Regents receives the 2002-2003 Progress Report from Louisiana State University and A&M College Relative to Implementation of the B.A. Program in Women's and Gender Studies. The next progress report shall be due June 1, 2003.**

The Board will recall that the University's progress report cited the departure of the new program's director as an event that precluded further steps toward addressing the resource needs of the program, as identified by external consultants. Those needs were identified as follows:

1. Specific WGS faculty lines;
2. A full-time position for the WGS Director; and
3. More administrative space and equipment for the program.

The University stated then that it would be in a better position to provide a more substantial report of its efforts in the summer of 2003. Since then, the University has hired a new Provost, appointed a new Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (A&S), and created an Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary Studies position in the College of A&S. LSU has also been developing further university-wide planning initiatives.

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

The new Program Director has provided a comprehensive plan for the program's development, giving specific attention to resource needs. These needs were made known during discussions of how the College of A&S was to address the resource needs of interdisciplinary programs in general. In compliance with new planning procedures at LSU, these needs were also presented in the context of the "flagship agenda's" requirement that programs use national benchmarks for self-assessment.

Regarding the specific resource needs identified by the external consultants, the progress report responds as follows.

**1. Specific WGS faculty lines.**

The report states that “the need for a permanent half-line or full-time faculty continues to be a pressing need” so that core coursework can be offered in a timely manner. Recently, the English Department at LSU voted to let the College of A&S dedicate 49% of one of its positions in English to WGS. In the future, the new Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary Studies is to advocate to the College for similar, additional positions.

**2. Full-time Position for the WGS Director.**

The progress report states that “the WGS Director is still a part-time administrative position (30%). Until the unit becomes a department or the program grows substantially, it is not deemed as absolutely necessary to have a line for a full-time Director. [...] The current staffing allows the office and program to run comfortably.”

**3. More Administrative Space and Equipment for the Program.**

The progress report states that “while space may become an issue as Women’s and Gender Studies grows over the next decade, we believe that this issue can be held in abeyance for further discussion with the Dean and Provost over the next few years.”

**STAFF SUMMARY**

The hiring of a new Associate Dean for Interdisciplinary Studies is a positive sign that the University is beginning to address needs of interdisciplinary degree programs such as WGS in a systematic and consistent manner. Similarly, the willingness of the English Department to dedicate half of one of the English Department’s faculty lines to WGS is commendable and should help stabilize core course offerings in WGS; the staff notes that these plans have yet to be concluded. The University states that a full-time Program Director is not needed at this time, due to low student numbers; yet, the staff believes that, without an administrator whose sole purpose is to develop the WGS program, it may be difficult to attract sufficient student interest. Given these concerns, the staff believes it prudent for the Board to require an additional progress report from the University.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

***The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee receive the 2003-04 Progress Report from Louisiana State University and A&M College Relative to Implementation of the B.A. Program in Women’s and Gender Studies. The next progress report shall be due June 1, 2004.***